



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 10, 2000

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ASMFC Releases Draft Scup Emergency Rule for Public Comment *Meetings to be held Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey*

Washington, D.C. – In February 2000, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved the development of an Emergency Rule to address problems in the summer period fishery. The Draft Emergency Rule is being finalized and will be available on Monday, March 13, 2000 for public review and comment. Public meetings have also been scheduled to gather public comment; the meetings will be held in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey.

The Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board will take final action on the Emergency Rule, during the ASMFC meeting week that is scheduled for April 3-6, 2000. The dates, times and locations of the hearings are as follows:

March 21, 2000, 5:00 PM

Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management
235 Promenade Street
Providence, Rhode Island
Contact: April Valliere at (401) 783-2304

March 23, 2000, 6:00 PM

New Jersey Div. of Fish, Game & Wildlife
Cape May County Extension Office
355 Courthouse – South Dennis Road
Cape May Court House, New Jersey
Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609) 292-2083

March 27, 2000, 7:30 PM

New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Bureau of Marine Affairs
205 N. Belle Meade Road
East Setauket, New York
Contact: John Mason at (631) 444-0452

March, 29, 2000, 7:00 PM

Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection
Marine Headquarters
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: David Simpson at (860) 434-6043

March 30, 2000, 6:30 PM

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Massachusetts Maritime Academy Auditorium
101 Academy Drive
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts
Contact: David Pierce at (617)626-1532

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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The draft Emergency Rule was developed in response to concern over the management program for the scup summer period commercial fishery. Currently, the fishery is managed under two different regimes – the Commission's plan uses a state-by-state quota system, while the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's plan uses a quota system. These two regimes have caused difficulties in ensuring that the summer period quota is not exceeded. The purpose of the Emergency Rule is to resolve these difficulties and ensure that the summer period quota is not exceeded, and that the quota is more equitably allocated among jurisdictions and user groups.

Fishermen and other interested parties can provide their input into the decision-making process by attending any of the scheduled public hearings, contacting their state agency, or by contacting the Commission. Copies of the draft Emergency Rule can be obtained, after March 13, 2000, by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400, or via the Commission's webpage under the Public Input page at <http://www.asmfc.org>.

The public comment period will extend through March 30, 2000. Comments on the draft Scup Emergency Rule should be forwarded to Robert Beal, Scup Fishery Management Plan Coordinator at 1444 Eye Street, N.W., Sixth Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005. For more information, please contact Robert Beal at (202) 289-6400 ext. 318.

NOTE TO PRESS: If you would like to receive the Commission's press releases via email, please contact Tina Berger, Public Affairs & Resource Specialist, at tberger@asmfc.org or fax to (202)289-6051.

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